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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THREE THOUSAND
ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIRST MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 18 December 1992, at 9.35 p.m.

President:	Mr. GHAREKHAN	(India)
Members:	Austria	Mr. HAJNOCZI
	Belgium	Mr. VAN DAELE
	Cape Verde	Mr. BARBOSA
	China	Mr. ZHANG Yan
	Ecuador	Mr. POSSO SERRANO
	France	Mr. LADSOUS
	Hungary	Mr. BUDAI
	Japan	Mr. MARUYAMA
	Morocco	Mr. BENJELLOUN-TOUIMI
	Russian Federation	Mr. SIDOROV
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. PLUMBLY
	United States of America	Mr. PERKINS
	Venezuela	Mr. ARRIA
	Zimbabwe	Mr. MUMBENGEGWI

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The meeting was called to order at 9.40 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

LETTER DATED 18 DECEMBER 1992 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF LEBANON TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/24980)

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to particpate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Yaacobi (Israel) and Mr. Makkawi (Lebanon) took places at the Council table; Mr. Elaraby (Egypt), Mr. Abu Odeh (Jordan) and Mr. Awad (Syrian Arab Republic) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 17 December 1992 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, which has been issued as document S/24979 and reads as follows:

"I have the honour to request that, in accordance with its previous practice, the Security Council invite Dr. Nasser Al-Kidwa, the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, to participate in the current debate of the Security Council with regard to the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories."

(The President)

The request is not made pursuant to rule 37 or rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, but if approved the Council would invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to participate, not under rule 37 or rule 39, but with the same rights of participation as those conferred by rule 37.

Does any member of the Security Council wish to speak to this request?

Mr. PERKINS (United States of America): The United States, as it normally does when this question is considered, will request a vote on the proposal before the Security Council, and the United States will vote against it on two grounds.

First, we believe that the Council does not have before it a valid request to speak. Secondly, the United States maintains that the Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) should be granted permission to speak only if the request complies with rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure.

It is unwarranted and unwise for the Council to break with its own practice and rules in this regard. As all members of the Council are aware, it is a long-established practice that Observers do not have the right to speak in the Security Council upon their own request. Rather, a request must be made on the Observer's behalf by a Member State. My Government sees no justification for any departure from that practice.

Further, there is nothing in resolutions adopted by the General Assembly that would warrant a change in Security Council practices. It is also clear that the General Assembly resolutions are, of course, not binding upon the Security Council. General Assembly resolution 43/177, which purported to change the designation of the PLO Mission, did so

(Mr. Perkins, United States)

"without prejudice to the observer status and functions of the Palestine Liberation Organization within the United Nations system, in conformity with relevant United Nations resolutions and practice".

That resolution does not constitute recognition of any State of Palestine. Like many other Members of the United Nations, the United States does not recognize such a State.

The United States has consistently taken the position that under the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council the only legal basis on which the Council may grant a hearing to persons speaking on behalf of non-governmental entities is rule 39. For four decades the United States has supported a generous interpretation of rule 39, and it would not have objected had this matter been appropriately raised under rule 39. We are, however, opposed to special and ad hoc departures from orderly procedure.

The United States consequently opposes granting to the Palestine Liberation Organization the same rights to participate in the proceedings of the Security Council as those that would be granted if that organization were representing a Member State of the United Nations. This point is, of course, in no way contradicted, but is indeed reinforced, by General Assembly resolution 43/177.

We believe in listening to all points of view, but not in a manner that requires violations of our provisional rules of procedure. In particular, the United States does not agree with the practice of the Security Council that recently appears selectively to try to enhance the prestige of those who wish to speak in the Council through a departure from the provisional rules of procedure. We consider this practice to be without legal foundation and to constitute, indeed, an abuse of our rules.

(Mr. Perkins, United States)

For all these reasons, the United States requests that the terms of the proposed invitation be put to a vote. Of course, the United States will vote against the proposal.

The PRESIDENT: If no other member of the Council wishes to speak at this stage, I shall take it that the Council is ready to vote on the request by Palestine.

It is so decided.

I therefore now put to the vote the request by Palestine.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Austria, Cape Verde, China, Ecuador, India, Japan, Morocco, Russian Federation, Venezuela, Zimbabwe

Against: United States of America

Abstaining: Belgium, France, Hungary, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The PRESIDENT: The result of the voting is as follows: 10 votes in favour, 1 against and 4 abstentions. The request has been approved.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) took a place at the Council table.

The PRESIDENT: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/24987, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

(The President)

I should also like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to the following documents: S/24974, which contains the text of a letter dated 17 December 1992 from the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People addressed to the Secretary-General; and S/24980, which contains the text of a letter dated 18 December 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council.

Members of the Council have also received photocopies of a letter from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, which will be issued as document S/24983.

The first name inscribed on the list of speakers is that of the Permanent Observer of Palestine, on whom I now call.

Mr. AL-KIDWA (Palestine) (interpretation from Arabic): Allow me, Sir, at the outset, to express to you our great pleasure at seeing you in the post of President of the Security Council during the discussion by the Council of this most important subject. Allow me also, Sir, to express our best wishes to you in fulfilling your mandate. At the same time, I should like to extend our congratulations to the Ambassador of Hungary for his able stewardship of the Council during the past month.

As members are aware, the day before yesterday, 16 December 1992, the Israeli Government ordered the deportation of 418 civilian Palestinians from the occupied Palestinian territory, including Al-Quds. Israeli authorities also arrested some 1,600 Palestinian citizens over the past few days. Yesterday, the 17th of December, under a court order by an Israeli court, the Israeli authorities deported 383 Palestinian citizens from their homeland, across the northern Israeli border, in the direction of the territory of the Lebanese Republic.

(Mr. Al-Kidwa, Palestine)

This Israeli action, on top of its being a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law, especially of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, of all the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and of the basic tenets of human rights, represents an unprecedented qualitative escalation of this kind of action by the Israeli Government. What happened actually represents a mass deportation that is tantamount to the infamous racial policy of "transfer", and is not so very different from the practices of "ethnic cleansing" and of other forms of racism. This is yet another vivid new example of the methods of depopulating the Palestinian territory by deporting Palestinian citizens.

What happened is a combination of illegal deportation, mass punishment - prohibited under international law - in a flagrant challenge by Israel, the occupying Power, to the international community, the United Nations and especially to this Council, which time and again has tried to stop Israel from repeating these practices.

At the political level, the action by the Israeli Government to carry out the deportation despite the many appeals and contacts by numerous parties and responsible individuals throughout the world with a view to persuading the Israeli Government to at least refrain from such action proves once again that the Israeli Government pays no heed to such contacts and appeals or indeed to international public opinion as a whole.

Perhaps one of the most important political aspects of this action is what the result of such Israeli action will be in terms of seriously sabotaging and even destroying completely the ongoing peace process launched in Madrid in September last year. The Israeli Government was fully aware of the destructive implications of such action when it embarked on it. This

(Mr. Al-Kidwa, Palestine)

indeed calls into serious doubt its intentions regarding the peace process as a whole.

The Palestinian delegation to the peace talks was forced to boycott the meeting yesterday morning, which was supposed to be the last in the eighth round of talks, pending the final decision by the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization on the principle of continuing with this process as a whole. The Palestinian side cannot agree to continue to participate in the peace process while Israel continues to pursue its illegal and repressive practices and policies against the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, especially the policy of deportation. Also, we cannot continue to participate in a process that cannot make any progress and is used by the other side only as a smokescreen for Israeli practices.

We call upon the international community and the co-sponsors of the Peace Conference in particular to make serious efforts in order to salvage the peace process, which means to begin to return those deportees and all the other persons who have been deported since the beginning of the occupation.

Some Israeli quarters talk of "temporary deportation", and try to differentiate between that and other forms of deportation. This is the same sort of talk, by the same sources about the political settlements and how different they are from security settlements. Obviously, this is totally unacceptable, and any illegal action, under international law, will remain illegal irrespective of the size of such action, its timing and the passage of time.

(Mr. Al-Kidwa, Palestine)

Allow me to address also another aspect of the action by the occupation authority: the violation of the sovereignty of another sister Arab country, Lebanon, through the deportation action. Allow me also to draw the attention of the Council to the current situation of the deportees and the severe and inhuman conditions they face at this very moment.

We believe the Security Council should immediately address this very serious issue of mass deportation by the Israeli Government. The Council should show firm resolve and take proper action in order to ensure the immediate return of the deportees and to ensure that other, similar actions will not be taken in the future by Israel, the occupying Power. We maintain that the Council should take into account its previous relevant resolutions and the various Israeli positions and actions vis-à-vis those resolutions. The Council should also take into account what we have mentioned regarding the destructive implications of the Israeli action. The Security Council should not only uphold international law and its previous resolutions, but should also act in the interests of peace.

We hope that the Council will adopt unanimously the draft resolution now before it and that it will act immediately to send the right message to all parties in the region, particularly the Israeli Government. In this case, we should like to see a prompt and rigorous implementation of the provisions of this resolution as part of a serious follow-up to the whole matter.

We came to speak before this Council about the same time last year, and it was late at night, if memory serves. Here I should like to repeat what we said then. We wish to convey the greetings of the people of Palestine and their best wishes to the members of this Council, as the Christmas and the new year approach. We sincerely hope that the new year will bring us closer to peace in the land of peace and in the entire Middle East region.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Permanent Observer of Palestine for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next name inscribed on the list of speakers is that of the representative of Lebanon, on whom I now call.

Mr. MAKKAWI (Lebanon) (interpretation from Arabic): First of all, allow me to convey to you, Sir, my delegation's congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. We know you as an able friend representing a friendly country to which we are bound by many ties of friendship and commonality of views. I am fully convinced that the work of the Council will be successful under your skilful guidance.

I also take pleasure in conveying thanks and commendations to Ambassador Erdös of Hungary for his excellent guidance of the work of the Council last month.

For a second time, the Security Council is faced with an exceptional situation, as a result of the deportation of almost 400 Palestinian civilians from their villages and their territory. They have been blindfolded and deported by bus and then left in harsh weather conditions in Lebanese territory. This has happened despite the fact that Lebanon had already announced that it would not receive them on its territory. This shows an unacceptable attitude on the part of Israel and constitutes active defiance of international law, the principle of sovereignty and respect for humankind as enshrined in the Fourth Geneva Convention. It is an act of defiance to the United Nations and a challenge to the Security Council, its resolutions and its authority.

The fact that this takes place under the eyes of the whole world while the peace talks continue in Washington, is further proof that Israel, in pursuing such policies, is not interested in the establishment of total,

(Mr. Makkawi, Lebanon)

comprehensive peace in the region but wants peace that is imposed by force. It wants to impose a fait accompli on all the populations of the region and takes into consideration none of the disastrous consequences of such a policy for the possibilities for coexistence in the region.

The Lebanese Government has frequently condemned the Israeli policy of deporting Palestinian citizens, which is a breach of article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, stipulating that civilian citizens should not be deported, whatever the cause. My Government condemns this Israeli policy of repression, which is increasing tension in the region as a whole. It dares to violate flagrantly the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Lebanese Republic. This is in contravention of the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the pertinent resolutions of the Security Council: resolutions 607 (1988), 608 (1988), 636 (1989), 641 (1989), 681 (1990), 694 (1991) and 726 (1992).

(Mr. Makkawi, Lebanon)

The question is how long will the Security Council allow Israel to exempt itself from the international principles and criteria of today - especially since Israel has already defied all those resolutions which condemned the deportation of civilians and called for their return to their homes. It is time for this Council to take practical steps to put an end to Israel's breaching of international law, to enable all the deportees to return, and thereby put an end to this shameful practice which is still being pursued by the Israeli authorities with impunity.

Lebanon calls on the Council to use its authority, including the authority conferred by Chapter 7 of the Charter, to adopt the draft resolution now before us and to ensure implementation of all other previous resolutions in this respect.

The fact that the Security Council may not have been in a position to stand up to Israeli policies in the past has complicated the situation in the region further and resulted in flagrant violations of the Palestinian citizens' rights to life, freedom, property and self-determination. It is surprising indeed that the Security Council in particular, and the United Nations in general, have been totally excluded from the efforts that aim at achieving a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and which have been under way for more than a year, at a time when the Security Council is increasingly involved in the search for solutions to all regional and local problems in the four corners of the earth.

Lebanon, which has suffered for 16 long years of bloody turmoil and which has been invaded twice by Israel is now doing its utmost, through its people and its Government, to re-establish normality in all its territory. But Israel persists in its policy of subversion against Lebanon, against its very

(Mr. Makkawi, Lebanon)

being and its institutions, despite the reassuring noises made by Israeli authorities from time to time.

On top of its being an action that breaches international law, this deportation of Palestinian citizens has been compounded by the fact that the deportees were deported into Lebanese territory regardless of the opposition of the Lebanese authorities. This constitutes yet another violation and a serious breach of the principle of sovereignty and the rights of States. Over and above the illegal nature of these actions, their consequences on the political level will be serious indeed with respect to the internal situation in Lebanon and for the peace process as a whole.

Lebanon has taken part in that peace process and the negotiations on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and on the basis of the invitation extended to it, in the hope of bringing about Israel's total withdrawal from southern Lebanon pursuant to Security Council resolution 425 (1978), as an essential first step towards the establishment of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East. Now, after 14 months of negotiation, we find ourselves still marking time, in square one, without any tangible progress. Instead of taking advantage of the opportune moment to build confidence between all parties, we find Israel pursuing its aggressive policy of repression in the occupied territories and in Lebanon and frenetically going full steam ahead with imposition of a fait accompli by building settlements and placing impediments in its dealings with the parties to the peace process.

This mass deportation by Israel yesterday gravely jeopardizes the peace process. It proves that the peace concept has not penetrated yet into the minds of Israeli policy makers and has not had any effect on their practices.

(Mr. Makkawi, Lebanon)

The steps they have taken also show that they still hold on to the use of force and the imposition of a fait accompli both in the occupied territories and vis-à-vis neighbouring countries. The violation of Lebanon's sovereignty in the brutal manner of yesterday is a very bad example indeed that shows how Israel deals with the inhabitants of the occupied territories and the neighbouring countries in complete contempt for international norms.

This mass deportation which took place yesterday has potentially grave internal repercussions in Lebanon because it frustrates my Government's endeavours to restore a normal situation within our country and poses an obstacle also to the liberation of southern Lebanon occupied by Israel. What Israel calls the buffer zone is in fact the point of departure used to undermine all of Lebanon's efforts to remedy the consequences of the bloody events to which I have referred. It is also used to steer deportees towards Lebanon, leading to the fear that those people will settle in that part of Lebanon. Lebanon has frequently repeated that it rejects that policy, which represents an imminent danger to the structure of Lebanese society and threatens the very identity of the Palestinian people.

For all the foregoing reasons, the Lebanese Government requests the Security Council to enforce its resolution 425 (1978), which stipulates that Israel should withdraw to the international borders in order for Lebanon to be able to exercise its sovereignty over all its territory.

Action by the Security Council in that direction would assist the peace process, because it would remove one of the major obstacles, create a climate that would be conducive to the success of that process and prove that the application of international law is the basis for the solution which will not be achieved by occupation or by repressive practices. Such action would also

(Mr. Makkawi, Lebanon)

help to lessen the friction in the Middle East. Finally, if peace is to be the future of the region, any delay in achieving it will only increase the number of victims and build up the tensions in the region which has suffered for a long time from destruction and aggression.

We repeat our call to the Security Council to perform its role in safeguarding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, to apply international and humanitarian law and to ensure that the Palestinians deported from their territory are enabled to return to their homes, even if this involves the application of the stipulations of Chapter 7 of the Charter. It is hoped that this might perhaps help in putting an end to this exceptional status which enables Israel to break international law, defy the resolutions of the Security Council and refuse to implement resolution 425, with impunity.

Mr. YAACOBI (Israel): At the outset, Sir, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. I have no doubt that your wealth of diplomatic experience and your personal skills will be invaluable in conducting the affairs of the Council. I would also like to congratulate your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. André Erdös, for the very able manner in which he conducted the affairs of the Council.

The enemies of peace are on the war path. Discouraged and dismayed by the bilateral negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbours, terrorist organizations such as the Islamic Jihad and Hamas have been mounting a relentless campaign of intimidation and bloodshed. Their goal is very simple: to kill Israelis and others, and to kill the peace process.

Since 1 March 1992, the Islamic fundamentalist group Hamas has carried out 30 terrorist attacks against Israelis, which have left 11 dead and 9 wounded. On 24 May 1992, a Hamas terrorist attacked an Israeli teenager, Helena Rapp, and stabbed her to death. Three days later, on 27 May 1992, a scholar and teacher, Shimon Biran, was attacked by a Hamas terrorist who stabbed him and killed him. More recently, on 7 December 1992, Lieutenant Hagai Amit, Sergeant-Major Yehuda Zamir and Sergeant-Major Shalom Tzabari were killed by Hamas terrorists. A few hours later, two dozen members of Hamas paraded through Gaza city, proudly proclaiming Hamas responsibility for the attack. On 12 December 1992, Hamas terrorists in a moving vehicle opened fire on a jeep, killing the driver, Yuval Tutanji, and injuring two other soldiers. On 15 December 1992, the body of hostage Sergeant-Major Nissim Toledano was found on the Jerusalem-Jericho highway.

(Mr. Yaacobi, Israel)

Members of Hamas had kidnapped him in his home town of Lod, and then strangled him and stabbed him to death. Those acts of barbarism were committed by those who are opposed to the peace talks. They are but further links in the chain of Hamas terror.

May I ask who condemned those murders? Who raised his voice in this Chamber or in any other place?

Islamic Jihad has a long and extensive record of terrorist attacks against Israeli soldiers and civilians. On 22 February 1992, a terrorist armed with a kitchen knife stabbed an Israeli to death and wounded three others. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the attack. On 21 October 1990, an Islamic Jihad terrorist murdered three Israelis in a neighbourhood of Jerusalem. Indifferent to the blood they shed and the pain they cause, terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad continue to wreak havoc.

The shrill polemics of the terrorists leave no doubt as to their intentions. In a leaflet issued on 23 September 1991, Hamas declared its unyielding opposition to the very notion of a Middle East peace conference and called for

> "a serious and effective move at all levels to foil the capitulation conference".

The Hamas leaflet also resorted to crude anti-Semitism when it declared,

> "All the Arab and Islamic peoples and movements must proceed immediately to perform their desired and expected role in the decisive, fateful battle against Jews, the enemies of God and humanity".

(Mr. Yaacobi, Israel)

Hamas rejects the very existence of Israel, and calls for its destruction. The covenant of Hamas, which was published in August 1988, states that

"The liberation of Palestine in its entirety, from the sea to the river, is the most lofty of strategic goals".

Among the methods which Hamas advocates as a means of achieving that goal are the murder of Jews and the burning of their property. In another leaflet, which was distributed in October 1990, Hamas declared that

"every Jew is a settler and it is our obligation to kill him."

In a speech broadcast on Jordanian television on 27 November 1990 the leader of Islamic Jihad, Sheikh Assad Tamimi said,

"The destiny of the Jews is to be slaughtered by us ... We have taken it upon ourselves to do our duty to society and torture them, because torture is the destiny of the Jews".

In an interview with Stern magazine published on 14 February 1991, Sheikh Tamimi said,

"All Jews must be killed. They have in their long history only brought misfortune to mankind".

Sheikh Tamimi may not be obligated to acknowledge that the Bible was given to the world by the Jewish people, or that Moses, Freud, Kafka and Einstein were all Jews.

Hamas and Islamic Jihad have engaged in operations which have included gunfire attacks on Israeli civilians and soldiers, the murder of suspected Palestinian collaborators, kidnappings and hostage-takings. And yet, despite

(Mr. Yaacobi, Israel)

the violent attacks against Israelis, despite the hateful and anti-Semitic rhetoric, some States members of this Council are aiming to condemn Israel for protecting its citizens and for taking measures in self-defence.

Surely the members of the Council are aware of the legitimate actions taken recently by other Governments in the region in the face of violence and threats by Islamic fundamentalist terrorist groups directed against the people and authorities in those States. The members of the Council are certainly aware as well of the threats against other Governments from fanatical groups of Islamic fundamentalists. Ignoring the serious threats posed by extremist groups can only endanger the stability of the Middle East and the prospects for reconciliation.

The Government of Israel, headed by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, will take whatever steps it deems necessary in order to protect the people of Israel. We cannot allow terrorist groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad to murder with impunity. No Government in the world would stand by idly in the face of persistent terrorist attacks against its citizens, and neither shall we. The right of self-defence is the natural right of any nation and State. We are determined to fight the forces of terrorism and to defend ourselves.

Today the spokesman of the Israel Defence Forces announced that a member of the Islamic Jihad had been arrested in the past few days for plotting to kill Faisal Husseini, a prominent Palestinian leader. The terrorist had planned to kill him at a public event in Jerusalem in order to undermine the peace negotiations.

(Mr. Yaacobi, Israel)

Since December 1987 at least 809 Palestinians have been murdered by Palestinian terrorists in the territories. Such acts of murder and extremism cannot be allowed to go unpunished, for this only creates more violence and encourages further extremism and fanaticism.

Israel did not give in when terrorists took Israeli students hostage at Maalot. Israel did not give in when terrorists took hostages at the Savoy Hotel in Tel Aviv. Israel did not give in when terrorists took hostages to Entebbe, Uganda. And Israel shall not give in to the terrorists of Islamic Jihad and Hamas, who have murdered innocent people and kidnapped Israelis, and who want to kidnap the peace process from the peoples of the Middle East.

(Mr. Yaacobi, Israel)

Therefore, Israel has decided to remove, for a period of time that will not extend beyond two years, members of terrorist organizations whose actions endanger the lives of people, or who incite others to such actions. Israel has issued temporary removal orders against hundreds of members of the terrorist organizations Hamas and Islamic Jihad, including their political and military leaders.

After carefully examining the relevant legal issues for 14 hours, the Supreme Court of Israel allowed the temporary-removal measures to proceed. While Nissim Toledano and other Jewish and Palestinian victims of the terrorists have no ability to appeal or protest, the terrorists themselves are being granted such a right through authorized committees of appeals.

I believe that the majority of the people in the Middle East - Arabs, Jews and others - are hoping to depart from the path of conflict and violence and are seeking to shape a new relationship and a better future for the peoples of the region, based upon reconciliation and peace. Israel remains fully committed to the quest for peace. We shall not withdraw from the peace talks in Washington, D.C. We shall not allow Hamas, Islamic Jihad and others to undermine the peacemaking process.

At a special Knesset session on 15 December 1992, Prime Minister Rabin stated:

> "We have only one course, and it is a dual one: a search for peace and an uncompromising war on terrorism. Despite the pain, we continue to cling to the pursuit of peace."

(Mr. Yaacobi, Israel)

In an announcement issued on 17 December 1992, Israel declared:

"The Government has determined that it is fully committed to making peace, and it is its intention to continue the negotiations being currently held in Washington. The Government views peace as the central objective of its policies. In parallel to the peacemaking, the Government is determined to fight terror in all its forms, and will strike at those who harm the citizens of Israel and the peacemaking."

We remain firm in our hope that the current set of negotiations will yield fruitful results, and we call upon our neighbours to continue with the negotiations.

The Palestinians may now make yet another great mistake by choosing to desert the negotiations. They made a historic mistake, from their point of view, in 1948 when they rejected the partition plan. They made another mistake when they rejected the Camp David Accords. And now they may give in to Hamas and Islamic Jihad, sacrificing their future in the process. Such a great mistake would serve to reconfirm the remark of Ambassador Abba Eban that the Palestinians never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity.

On 17 December 1992, the White House issued a statement, and I fully concur with its assertion:

"Peace between Israel and its neighbours has never been more achievable. A way has been created whereby the people of the Middle East can escape the wars that have too often defined the region's history. Making peace a reality through these negotiations is the only way to frustrate those who would sabotage the peace process by violence."

(Mr. Yaacobi, Israel)

I have not come here today to sit as a defendant in the dock. Rather, I am here on behalf of the people of Israel as an accuser of the forces of terrorism, who seek to harm the moral foundations of civilized society. I am here as an accuser of those who so cruelly target the innocent to further their fanatical goals. I am here as an accuser of those who are trying, at any price and in any way possible, to murder the prospects for peace.

It is time for this Council to cease condemning the victims of terrorism. The enemies of peace are using terrorism to try to divert us all away from the path towards peace. We must not allow them to succeed. There is simply too much at stake for the future of all of us.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Israel for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Jordan. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. ABU ODEH (Jordan) (interpretation from Arabic): May I, at the outset, express to you, Mr. President, my delegation's sincere congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the current month. We wish you full success in fulfilling your mandate. We trust that your experience, wisdom and skills will ensure effective stewardship of the Council.

I take this opportunity to express also my delegation's appreciation of the efforts made by the representative of Hungary and of the able manner in which he conducted the business of the Council last month.

I should like to commend you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting for the purpose of discussing an extremely important and serious subject -

(Mr. Abu Odeh, Jordan)

namely, the question of the deportation, by the Government of Israel, of about 400 Palestinians from their homeland.

In point of fact, this is not the first time for the Council to discuss the question of Israel's deportation of Palestinian citizens. Over the past quarter century - since the Israeli authorities occupied the Palestinian territories of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Syrian Golan - this Council has time and again examined the question of deportations, and it has adopted several resolutions, the most recent of which was resolution 726 (1992).

It was hoped that Israel would put an end, once and for all, to this policy, which constitutes a flagrant breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and a heinous violation of human rights, yet the Security Council meets today in order to examine a new breach of the Geneva Convention and yet another contravention of human rights arising from a new deportation action taken by Israel yesterday in disregard of the Charter, the Treaty and the resolutions, which have an international character.

Why Israel does all this, why it flouts the resolutions of the Security Council and international covenants, only God the Lord knows. However, Israel does not want the international community to puzzle out its motives, so it has given its own reasons.

(Mr. Abu Odeh, Jordan)

A few days ago, Israel gave two reasons for this heinous action. It gave the first before the deportation, when it stated that it would severely punish those responsible for abducting and assassinating the Israeli soldier. The second reason was given after the deportation, when Israel said that all its actions were taken in order to safeguard the peace process.

With regard to the first question, allow me to state here that the time has come for Israel to realize that even a rose bush would resist any attempt to uproot it. This is the law of nature. If Israel believes that collective punishment, deportation, the demolition of houses, assassination, the detention of men and women, the usurpation and expropriation of land and the establishment of settlements will be met passively and without resistance by the Palestinian people, then Israel is mistaken. Indeed, it is seriously mistaken.

I hope that this will not be construed as a lack of sympathy or regret for victims of murder. Any killing arouses human sorrow and sadness. However, by the same token, and on humanitarian grounds, we feel sad for an incapacitated, wheelchair-bound old clergyman who must spend the rest of his life languishing in jail. We feel sorry for scores of children killed and injured by the bullets of the soldiers of occupation. We are saddened by the fact that thousands of young men suffer in jails and prison camps after having lost all hope of a bright future. We are saddened by the trampling of human dignity, examples of which we saw during the deportation. We share the sorrow and anguish of mothers, fathers, spouses and children who have lost their loved ones or been forcibly separated from them when they were jailed or deported. We certainly feel sorry for all of that. If we are truly anxious to respect our very humanity and understand our sorrow, then the answer is obvious: we must achieve peace under the rule of international law.

(Mr. Abu Odeh, Jordan)

This brings me to the second reason given by Israel for the deportations - safeguarding the peace process. Nothing could be more shocking or ridiculous than such a statement. How can the peace process be preserved by deportating 400 people from their cities and villages, by uprooting 400 human beings from their native lands and separating them from their dear ones, by separating 400 breadwinners from their families, or by planting grief, pain and bitterness in 400 households and anger in many others?

I deeply regret having to say here that the real reason for Israel's deporting 400 Palestinians was neither the first nor the second of its stated reasons. It was, rather, the rivalry in the Israeli domestic political arena. We understand and appreciate rivalry between various parties and factions in any country of the world. That is an accepted part of the political game. However, using a third party - another people - as a pawn in that game and making it pay a price in human blood, pain, detention and forced deportation is unacceptable under any jurisdiction, body of law or code of ethics. Indeed, it was precisely against violations of this nature that human rights conventions have been drawn up and this Organization was founded. The preservation of the peace process and the protection of the Palestinians' human rights run in parallel lines.

My delegation hopes that this Council will adopt a firm resolution ensuring the prompt return of the deportees to their cities and villages, a second to follow up on the implementation of the first, and a third compelling Israel to respect the Geneva Conventions and affirming their applicability on the occuped Palestinian territories. The adoption and implementation of such resolutions are one way to safeguard the peace process, because they will restore and build confidence between the negotiating parties.

(Mr. Abu Odeh, Jordan)

The peace process cannot be preserved by deporting 400 Palestinian citizens, separating them from their families, or destabilizing the security of the countries of the region. Rather, its preservation can be achieved only through the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and upon respect for international conventions.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Jordan for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. AWAD (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): I should like to take this opportunity to extend to you, Sir, on behalf of my delegation our warmest congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. I should also like to extend our thanks to Ambassador André Erdös for the exemplary manner in which he conducted the work of the Council last month.

The Security Council meets again, as its authority is being blatantly defied, to discuss the serious situation in the occupied Arab territories in the wake of Israel's deportation of hundreds of Palestinians from their homeland on Thursday, 17 December. This act of provocation - likely to jeopardize the current peace process, imperil the civilian Palestinian population and make it suffer - can no longer be condoned now that Israel has been allowed to repeat such conduct without moral scruples or international deterrence. Israel's repeated deportation of Palestinian citizens is a flagrant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention governing the conduct of an occupying Power. Furthermore , this provocative step illustrates Israel's cynical way of taking lightly the Arab negotiator who is strenuously seeking to salvage the peace option in the Middle East.

(Mr. Awad, Syrian Arab Republic)

In the not so distant past, within the Palestinians' living memory, Israel indulged in the practice of deporting Palestinians from their lands, homes and families. It organized massed, forcible expulsions that recalled the bleakest and most sorrowful pages of human history.

(Mr. Awad, Syrian Arab Republic)

In the not so distant past, the land of Palestine witnessed events, which are still preserved in the annals of the international Organization, and which constituted the Israeli version of "ethnic cleansing" policies against the people of Palestine with a view to forcing it in vain to forsake its history, renounce its geography and bargain over its very humanity. In the recent past also the Security Council and the General Assembly met on scores of occasions to condemn Israel's offensive conduct of forcibly and collectively deporting Palestinian citizens. However the resolutions of international legality were only met with neglect, condescension and disregard on the part of Israel.

One day, the Israeli occupation authorities feel like closing down an entire Palestinian city for months and arresting thousands of its inhabitants. On another day, it imposes a curfew over all the occupied territories, declaring them closed military zones. On still other occasions, it closes down Palestinian universities for years on end and then takes it upon itself to demolish mosques and churches. As if all of this were not enough, the Israeli occupation authorities gave themselves the right to occupy southern Lebanon, establish the so-called security zone, annex the occupied Syrian Golan and appropriate occupied Jerusalem by way of implementing the fallacious doctrine of vital corridors, which is based on illusions harboured at the expense of the rights and lands of others.

Today, Israel's so-called "doves" emulate its "hawks" by resorting to the deportation of hundreds of Palestinians from their homeland in a manner precedented only in those days of mass expulsions of Palestinians from their villages and cities in 1948, in complete disregard of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, international

(Mr. Awad, Syrian Arab Republic)

law, international humanitarian law and international legality and its resolutions which condemn the Israeli policy of deportation and denounce the decisions of the Israeli Government, which is the occupying Power.

Security Council resolutions 681 (1990) and 726 (1992) were unambiguous in identifying the victim and the accused, and in defining the parameters of the collective international position regarding Israel's cynical disregard for international covenants and norms. Regardless of the pretexts and arguments invoked by the rulers of Israel, Israel bears full responsibility for the tension in the region and for obstructing the process of peace. Therefore, it is responsible and stands condemned under the full force of the resolutions of international legitimacy.

It is incumbent upon the entire international community firmly to stand up to Israel's acts of provocation and to combat its daily terrorizing of the Arab population in the occupied territories. The entire world has come to realize that double standards are no longer acceptable, that the principles of international law, rather than the law of the jungle, should be respected, and that the resolutions of the United Nations, rather than brute force, must be implemented.

My delegation calls upon the Security Council to fully shoulder its responsibilities for the preservation of the freedom, dignity and safety of the Arab and Palestinian citizens in the occupied territories through the adoption of urgent measures with the aim of forcing the Israeli occupation authorities to respect the Geneva Convention and relevant international norms and hence to put an end to the policy of mass forcible expulsion and to return the Palestinian deportees to their homeland, their homes and their families.

(Mr. Awad, Syrian Arab Republic)

The Israeli authorities ceaselessly call for confidence-building measures in the region, prompted only by their interest in water, the environment, electricity and commerce, and conveniently forget that more important than any of these are the people under occupation, their fate and the land they live on. It seems that the Israeli understanding of the peace process runs counter to the consensual international developments and counter to the wishes of the co-sponsors of and the participants in the peace process. Otherwise, how can we possibly consider the mass expulsion of Palestinians from their territories and from their families, children, spouses and businesses as a step towards creating confidence in the region? I leave it to this august gathering and to world public opinion to answer that question.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. ELARABY (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. President, as this is the first time that I address the Council this month, allow me, first of all, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I am certain that your diplomatic experience will effectively help us to be successful in our work. Allow me also to pay tribute to the very exemplary manner in which the President of the Council last month conducted our work.

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

The Security Council meets today to take up once again dangerous developments in the Middle East, that have further exacerbated the situation in that region and impeded all the efforts under way to restore peace there.

Israel's deportation of hundreds of Palestinians from the occupied territories and their transportation into a region it occupies in southern Lebanon is an act that breaches countless international conventions. First and foremost, it is a very grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and, in particular, article 49 of that Convention. It also contravenes Israel's obligations as an occupying Power under the Convention and, indeed, its obligations vis-à-vis all the parties to the Convention.

Secondly, the deportations constitute a violation of all relevant Security Council resolutions in this respect and in particular of the last resolution adopted in this connection, namely resolution 726 (1992), which was adopted in January of this year. That resolution called upon Israel, as the occupying Power, to ensure the return to the occupied territories of all the Palestinians deported and to refrain from any further deportations.

Thirdly, the measures taken by Israel constitute a flagrant violation of the sovereignty and independence of Lebanon and a consecration of the policy Israel has been pursuing for a number of years now, one that makes it perfectly clear that it will implement none of the Security Council's resolutions in this connection, in particular resolution 425 (1978). The continued Israeli occupation of the Arab territories and its continuing repressive policies constitute a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention that is bound to foment violence, since it leads all those under the yoke of

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

Israeli occupation to lose hope that they may one day recover their legitimate right to lead decent and stable lives, regain their freedoms and once again live in peace in their own lands. All this leads to the escalation of violence in the occupied territories.

This latest Israeli action took place at a very delicate juncture in the region's history. This year, for the first time, we have witnessed in the Middle East a glimmer of hope in the peace process with the participation of all the parties concerned in bilateral negotiations aimed at establishing a lasting and just peace in the Middle East based on an exchange of land for peace and the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

What Israel has done contradicts the positive climate that can guarantee the success of the peace process. It contradicts the credibility of Israel's position. These events weaken all peace-loving forces in the region and consolidate the position of those who preach and advocate fanaticism and who are trying to achieve their goals by violence.

The Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs has condemned the measures adopted by Israel. Egypt calls upon the Security Council to assume its role as mandated by the Charter and urges it to call upon Israel to comply with the provisions of the Charter, the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention and preceding resolutions of the Council, as well as with the appeal of the whole of the international community, and to ensure the immediate return to the occupied territories of all those who were deported yesterday as a first step towards the return of all who were expelled in the past. We call upon Israel to refrain from taking any measure in the occupied territories that may contravene international law.

(Mr. Elaraby, Egypt)

We in Egypt hope for the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East under which all in the region, including Israel, can live in harmony, far from the threat of war.

In conclusion, I should like to appeal to the Israeli authorities to show respect for their international obligations and to implement all the United Nations resolutions. I appeal to them to try with goodwill to end the occupation that is exacerbating the violence and hatred in the region and creating a situation in which all hope is lost. We hope for the restoration of peace and for the return of the Palestinian people to a peaceful coexistence with all the peoples in the region and an end to the continued fighting and destruction.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Egypt for his kind words addressed to me.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that that is the case.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

Before putting the draft resolution to the vote, I shall call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. BENJELLOUN-TOUIMI (Morocco) (interpretation from French): We are sincerely sorry that the Security Council finds itself once again seized of the question of the deportation of Palestinians from the occupied territories. Unfortunately, as yesterday's reprehensible events show, this inhuman and illegal practice is being continued, in violation of international law and in particular of Israel's obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949.

(Mr. Benjelloun-Touimi, Morocco)

The illegal mass deportations are all the more intolerable because they are a flagrant violation of the independence and political sovereignty of a neighbouring fraternal country, Lebanon.

My delegation is not speaking this evening to incite passions. We wish to intervene in a constructive spirit, to continue to make a contribution and to lend our untiring support to the efforts to bring a just and lasting peace to the Middle East. However, the mass deportations that took place yesterday compel us to take a very clear and firm position. The Kingdom of Morocco has already on many occasions expressed its condemnation of deportations from the occupied territories by the Israeli authorities. As I have said, such practices contravene the Fourth Geneva Convention, which applies to those territories, and they can be neither tolerated nor justified.

Today, therefore, I should like to reiterate my country's total rejection of those practices and vigorous condemnation of the behaviour of the Israeli authorities, and to express our revulsion at such machinations, which cannot fail to have a negative impact on the ongoing peace process. Consequently, as in the past, my country urgently calls upon the Government of Israel to put an end to its shameful and inadmissible policies and to work to achieve a climate of confidence favourable to dialogue and negotiation.

(Mr. Benjelloun-Touimi, Morocco)

Is it not high time for the international community to confirm once again its unanimous position on the need to respect the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, in particular their right to remain in their own territory under proper protection, and to exercise, in acceptable conditions, their right to self-determination within the context of a just and lasting solution?

My delegation is of course encouraged by the fact that the Council has reacted so quickly today to these mass deportations of Palestinian civilians by Israel, which did not hesitate to violate in this way the imperative rules of international law and the decisions of our Council. However, one is entitled to wonder how many times the Council will have to act or react before Israel decides to respect its decisions and to comply with its obligations under international law.

The Kingdom of Morocco will therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution submitted to the Council, in the hope that this text will be adopted unanimously. We will thereby be sending a strong and clear signal to Israel that it is time to stop flaunting the international will and to help to bring about a situation conducive to the establishment of real peace in the area. Otherwise, we dare to hope that the necessary conclusions will be drawn by the Council if Israel, to which our resolutions are addressed, persists in violating its decisions and in disregarding the rules of international law.

Mr. MUMBENGEGWI (Zimbabwe): Once again the Security Council is meeting in response to the outrageous deportation by Israel, in this instance of some 400 Palestinian civilians, from the occupied territories in a clear breach of the norms of international law, the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, and with complete disregard for earlier Security Council resolutions pertaining to such deportations.

(Mr. Mumbengegwi, Zimbabwe)

When the Council adopted resolution 726 (1992) in January of this year, Israel had deported 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories. That resolution, in expressing the Council's outrage at that action, called upon Israel to refrain from any further deportations and to ensure the safe return to the occupied territories of all those deported. It is obvious that such a call has been totally ignored, and the number of deportees has continued to escalate.

My delegation is of the opinion that this complete disregard for Security Council resolutions should neither be allowed nor tolerated. Measures should be taken by the Council to ensure that its resolutions are complied with without exception. Any selective enforcement of the Council's resolutions erodes the Council's prestige and credibility.

The dumping of Palestinian civilians in southern Lebanon is a clear violation of Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Security Council is in duty bound to condemn this violation unambiguously.

Zimbabwe is aware of the ongoing peace process in the Middle East and of the need to maintain this momentum. However, in uprooting 400 Palestinian civilians and dumping them under extremely inhuman and harsh conditions Israel is signalling its lack of good faith in the negotiations. Indeed, it is a move that could be detrimental to the entire peace process. We therefore call upon the Israeli authorities to ensure the immediate return of all Palestinian deportees to their homes.

My delegation, therefore, in supporting the adoption of the draft resolution before us, hopes that the Security Council will take all the necessary action to ensure that it is implemented and complied with.

The PRESIDENT: I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/24987.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Austria, Belgium, Cape Verde, China, Ecuador, France, Hungary, India, Japan, Morocco, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela, Zimbabwe

The PRESIDENT: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has therefore been adopted unanimously as resolution 799 (1992).

I shall now call on those representatives who have asked to be allowed to make statements after the voting.

Mr. PERKINS (United States of America): The United States clearly believes that the deportation of individuals from the occupied territories is a contravention of article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention as it pertains to the treatment of inhabitants of these territories. My Government also believes charges of wrongdoing should be brought before a court of law based on evidence to be argued in a fair trial, which would afford full judicial process. As my predecessor stated before the Council last January, and as my Government has stated on several occasions since, we have repeatedly urged the Government of Israel immediately and permanently to cease deportations as a method of punishment and to comply fully with the Fourth Geneva Convention in all of the territories that it has occupied since 5 June 1967.

We regret that the Government of Israel took the step of going ahead with the deportations. By doing so, it plays into the hands of those whose goal is to scuttle the peace process. It also imposes an unfair burden on Lebanon. We have therefore voted in favour of the resolution, which calls on Israel to refrain from deporting any Palestinian civilians from the occupied teritories.

(Mr. Perkins, United States)

While we have consistently condemned deportation as we do now, we cannot ignore and must equally strongly condemn the brutal murders of Israelis by Hamas which preceded these deportations and which are part of a deliberate strategy to undermine the peace process. We are deeply troubled by the recent increase in violence in the occupied territories and by Israeli and Palestinian casualties, including the recent murder of the Israeli policeman by Hamas.

(Mr. Perkins, United States)

We call on all parties to avoid unilateral actions - be they deportations or the terrorist acts of violence for which Hamas has claimed credit - that raise tensions. Such actions only complicate the task of pursuing peace.

As we have stated in the past, the United States regards the phrase

"all the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem," (resolution 799 (1992), para. 2)

which appears in the resolution, as being merely demographically and geographically descriptive and not indicative of sovereignty.

Mr. VAN DAELE (Belgium) (interpretation from French): The European Community and its member States have just strongly condemned Israel's decision to deport more than 400 Palestinians. They regret that the Israeli authorities have not put an end to the policy of deportation, which constitutes a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and, in this case, an attack on Lebanon's sovereignty. The Twelve have strongly urged the Israeli authorities to authorize the immediate return of all those deported.

Belgium also deplores the resumption of violence and terrorism in the occupied territories. Indeed, if this situation continues, it could undermine the peace process now under way - a process which constitutes the only means of resolving the region's problems.

Belgium therefore appeals to all the parties to show moderation and restraint in order to permit the peace process to continue and, we hope, to succeed.

Mr. MARUYAMA (Japan): First of all, Japan condemns the terrorist act of the brutal slaying of an Israeli soldier by an extremist group. Terrorism in any form, be it against a Jew or a Palestinian, must be neither tolerated nor condoned.

(Mr. Maruyama, Japan)

It is utterly deplorable, however, that following this incident the Israeli Government decided on 16 December to deport more than 400 Palestinians from the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip and deported the majority of them to Lebanon the following day. This deportation was very sudden and involved a large number of people. Such a step is a clear violation of the provisions of international law concerning the treatment of residents in an occupied area. Japan does not tolerate such action and demands the immediate return to the occupied territories of all those deported. The Security Council has repeatedly condemned any Israeli action of deportation, and we regret that Israel has so far failed to heed the call of the Council. Indeed, this action of deportation is all the more deplorable since it could very likely jeopardize the entire Middle East peace process, which is now at a particularly critical stage.

Japan believes it was incumbent upon the Council to adopt a resolution to stop Israel from pursuing its deportation activities.

The Government of Japan, at the same time, strongly urges the parties concerned to exercise self-restraint and hopes that they will continue the peace negotiations, overcoming such an incident and such measures taken by the Israeli Government, and will work towards attaining peace.

Mr. PLUMBLY (United Kingdom): It is a tragedy that the Council is meeting once again to consider events in the occupied territories and Israel, just when the peace process was showing some signs of beginning to bear fruit.

The key point to bear in mind in connection with the latest events in the occupied territories and Israel is that the objective of those who have fomented the violence in the Gaza Strip and carried out the brutal kidnapping and murder of Sergeant Major Toledano is to undermine the peace process. This must not be allowed to happen. The vital interests of everyone concerned -

(Mr. Plumbly, United Kingdom)

the United Nations, the Arab Governments in the region, the Israeli Government and the Palestinians - must be to preserve and pursue the peace process.

In that context, my Government has supported the resolution we have just adopted. The deportation of Palestinian civilians from the occupied territories is a violation of international law and of numerous Security Council resolutions, most recently resolution 726 (1992). At the same time, it undermines the whole peace process. We condemn both the acts of violence and the deportation of Palestinian civilians. These simply play into the hands of those who wish to derail the peace process.

We call on the parties to devote themselves to the bilateral and multilateral negotiations with renewed vigour and determination.

Mr. LADSOUS (France) (interpretation from French): The Israeli Government's decision, endorsed by the Supreme Court, to deport several hundred Palestinian civilians from the occupied territories is extremely grave and arouses our deep concern.

My delegation would like to recall two facts. First, France has always condemned acts of violence, whatever the source, and therefore strongly condemns the assassination of the border policeman Nissim Toledano. Secondly, my country has never accepted the procedure of deportation, which constitutes a flagrant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention - a text that applies *de jure* to all the occupied territories, including Jerusalem. Expulsion measures, furthermore, are contrary to several resolutions adopted by our Council, the last two of which on this subject, resolutions 694 (1991) and 726 (1992), were adopted unanimously in May of 1991 and January 1992, respectively.

(Mr. Ladsous, France)

Today we can only condemn even more strongly the current deportations. First of all, they are on a very large scale, affecting several hundred people; secondly, they constitute collective punishment, which is categorically unacceptable, no matter what events lead up to it; thirdly, they constitute a violation of Lebanon's sovereignty; and, finally, they introduce a very serious political impediment into the peace process under way, which France hopes will be continued constructively.

To succeed, this delicate negotiation process needs a climate of good will, openness and, above all, calm on the spot. Over and above the person of the Israeli border policeman, the assassins had their sights set on the peace process. We must not fall into that trap.

To respond to the mass expulsions we have witnessed, my delegation took a position in favour of the adoption of a resolution strongly condemning the deportations and reaffirming Lebanon's sovereignty, to which my Government attaches particular importance. We therefore lent our support to resolution 799 (1992).

Mr. SIDOROV (Russian Federation) (interpetation from Russian): We in Russia feel deep concern at the new escalation of tension in the occupied Palestinian territories. The present disturbing events are taking place against the background of the continuing Arab-Israeli negotiations and may seriously undermine them.

(Mr. Sidorov, Russian Federation)

The process of a Middle East settlement is now at what is perhaps its most crucial moment, and we cannot allow a return to a policy of force which has already shown its absolute futility.

Russia condemns any acts of terrorism, no matter who commits them or what justification is asserted. We cannot allow the provocative acts of extremists to endanger the efforts of those seeking a lasting peace in that region. As a sponsor of the Middle East negotiations, Russia believes that all the participants should pursue a realistic and constructive policy that truly facilitates progress towards stability and security in the Middle East. It is obvious that the easing of tension on the West Bank and in Gaza would be in the interest of all parties, both the Arabs and the Israelis. We in Russia are convinced that the restoration of tranquillity on the West Bank and in Gaza cannot be achieved by force, and that includes the deportation of Palestinian residents.

The Security Council has repeatedly dealt with the problem of deportation. We regret that Israel has failed to heed the appeal, contained in Security Council resolution 726 (1992), to refrain from deporting any Palestinian civilian from the occupied territories. We support the request that the Israeli authorities should, in accordance with the obligations they have assumed under the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, renounce deportations and ensure the immediate and safe return of all deportees.

For these reasons, the delegation of the Russian Federation voted in favour of the resolution we have just adopted.

Mr. HAJNOCZI (Austria): Austria voted in favour of resolution 799 (1992) out of the conviction that the deportation of several hundred Palestinians from the occupied territories, carried out by Israel, the occupying Power, can only be condemned and deplored.

Austria's clear stand against all acts of terrorism is well known. But deportations can never achieve the professed goal of creating or enhancing security and stability, not even in a short-term perspective. Deportations, in particular in such massive proportions, can only achieve the opposite: they will certainly contribute to an aggravation of the already tense situation in the territories.

The measures taken by the Israeli Government constitute without any doubt a grave and clear breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, which is applicable to all the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem. We fully endorse the Secretary-General's call on Israel to rescind the deportation orders and to permit the safe and immediate return of those expelled. We also join in his appeal to all sides to avoid steps that might lead to a worsening of the situation and could hamper the peace process aimed at achieving a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Austria is, furthermore, extremely concerned at Israel's violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon and expects that Israel will desist from such actions.

The deportations are bound to have a detrimental effect upon the peace process currently under way, and this we deeply regret. It does not need to be emphasized again that Austria firmly supports this peace process, which should achieve just and lasting peace in the Middle East region, based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

The PRESIDENT: The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 11.35 p.m.